

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 SSC-01 CU-04 DRC-01 /114 W

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R 280730Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TORUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9934

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 LAHORE 0474

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: PARTIAL CABINET NAMED IN PUNJAB

REF: LAHORE 0420

BEGIN SUMMARY: PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER RAMAY NAMED FIVE-MAN PARTIAL CABINET MARCH 25. MINISTERS SO FAR NAMED REPRESENT ALL FIVE GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS OF PUNJAB. THREE WERE IN KHAR CABINET AND TWO ARE NEW-COMERS. TWO ARE NON-CONTROVERSIAL AND ONE HAS BEEN CONSIDERED A KHAR MAN. RAMAY HAS PROMISED EXPANSION OF CABINET BY MID-APRIL, INDICATING THAT FORMATION OF CABINET HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE A DIFFICULT PROCESS. THERE IS NO CONSENSUS IN LAHORE AS TO MEANING OF NEW GOVERNMENT: SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE IT SIGNIFIES ONGOING INTERNECINE PPP STRUGGLE IN PUNJAB, OTHERS SUSPECT RAMAY MAY BE MERELY CARETAKER AND STILL OTHERS FORESEE RAMAY INCHING TOWARD CONSOLIDATION OF POWER BY

SO-CALLED LEFTISTS IN PARTY. END SUMMARY

1. LATE MARCH 25, FIVE MINISTERS WERE SWORN IN TO

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RAMAY CABINET BY PUNJAB GOVERNOR. THREE OF FIVE WERE

MEMBERS OF OUTGOING KHAR CABINET: DR.ABDUL KHALIQ, MIAN MOHAMMAD AFZAL WATTOO AND ABDUL HAFEEZ KARDAR. KHALIQ WAS DESIGNATED BY RAMAY AS "MOST SENIOR MINISTER" AND ALLOCATED PORTFOLIOS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE. WATTOO, WHO WAS RANKING MINISTER IN KHAR CABINET WAS DROPPED TO SECONDARY POSITION BEHIND KHALIQ AND ALLOCATED PORTFOLIOS OF IRRIGATION AND POWER. KARDAR HAS MOVED FROM EDUCATION TO INDUSTRIES, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT. TWO NEW MINISTERS WERE ALSO SWORN IN: SARDAR SAGHIR AHMAD FROM JHANG DISTRICT OF SARGHODA DIVISION, WHO WAS GIVEN PORTFOLIOS OF LABOR, LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND DARDAR NASRULLAH KHAN DA ISHAK OF

SERA GHAZI KHAN DISTRICT OF MULTAN DIVISION, WHO HAS PORTFOLIOS OF FOOD AND COOPERATION.

2. AFTER SWEARING-IN CEREMONY, CHIEF MINISTER INFORMED PRESS THAT AT LEAST FIVE MORE MINISTERS (AND POSSIBLY SEVEN OR EIGHT) WOULD BE APPOINTED AFTER PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY SESSION BEGINS APRIL 2. JOURNALISTS POINTED OUT THAT MINISTERS ALREADY SWORN IN REPRESENT EACH OF FIVE DIVISIONS OF PUNJAB PROVINCE (KHALIQ - RAWALPINDI; WATTOO - BAHAWALPUR; AND KARDAR - LAHORE). RAMAY SAID THAT WAS COINCIDENCE AND CALLED THE NEW CABINET "TASK ORIENTED." IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER QUESTION, HE SAID HIS CABINET MIGHT EVENTUALLY HAVE FEMALE MEMBER, BUT ASSERTED THAT IT WAS NOT "IMPERATIVE" THAT MINISTERIAL POSITION GO TO A WOMAN. RAMAY TOLD PRESS HE WAS IN FAVOR OF HAVING PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES IN PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY AND HOPED THAT CONSTITUTION WOULD BE SUITABLY AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT POSSIBILITY. PRESS QUICKLY RECALLED THAT GOP LAW MINISTER PIRZADA HAD MADE STATEMENT THAT PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES WOULD BE PROVIDED IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUT NOT IN PROVINCES. RAMAY RESPONDED THAT PUNJAB GOVERNMENT WOULD NEED PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES ALSO. ASKED IF HE CONTEMPLATED RADICAL CHANGES IN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND WHETHER ANY MORE MINISTERS FROM OUTGOING GOVERNMENT WOULD BE INCLUDED IN HIS CABINET, RAMAY SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE IN WHOLESALE CHANGES, THAT MEMBERS OF BOTH OLD AND NEW CABINETS WERE HIS FRIENDS,

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BUT THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE OF CHANGES IN SYSTEM RATHER THAN SHIFTS OF INDIVIDUALS.

3. FULL BIOGRAPHIC REPORTS ON NEW MINISTERS WILL BE POUCHED TO DEPT AND ISLAMABAD. IN INTERIM, FOLLOWING SKETCHES ARE OFFERED:

(A) KHALIQ IS NON-CONTROVERSIAL

MIDDLE CLASS DOCTOR IN HIS FORTIES FROM RAWALPINDI. HE STUDIED IN ENGLAND AND HAS WORKED IN ADEN. HE OBTAINED DEGREE IN ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE FROM PUNJAB UNIV. IN 1969, JUST BEFORE JOINING PPP. AS IRRIGATION MINISTER IN PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, HE WORKED CLOSELY WITH CONGEN ON FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS.

(B) WATTOO, ABOUT 40, IS SMALL LAND OWNER AND LAWYER FROM BAHAWALNAGAR DISTRICT OF BAHAWALPUR DIVISION. HE LOST 1970 ELECTION ON PPP TICKET, BUT CAME IN UN-OPPOSED VIA BY-ELECTION LAST JANUARY. WATTOO HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF PUNJAB PPP SINCE JULY 1973, HAVING SUCCEEDED SHEIKH MOHAMMAD RASHID, BUT MAY BE FORCED BY RAMAY TO RESIGN IN ORDER TO REMAIN IN CABINET. HE IS CONSIDERED POLITICAL OPPORTUNIST, ALTHOUGH IN PREVIOUS CABINET HE WAS SAID TO BE CLOSE TO KHAR.

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NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

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R 280745Z MAR 74

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(C) KARDAR, ABOUT 48, WON FAME IN CRICKET, AND FOR ABOUT 20 YEARS WAS PROFESSIONAL IN THAT SPORT OF HIGH INTERNATIONAL STANDING. HE GRADUATED WITH HONORS IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND ECONOMICS FROM OXFORD. HE COMES FROM PROMINENT LANDLORD FAMILY OF LAHORE, AND

WAS EXECUTIVE OF LARGE INDUSTRIAL CONCERN IN EAST PAKISTAN IN MID-60'S. AFTER JOINING PPP IN 1970, HE WAS ELECTED TO LAHORE SEAT, AND LATER REPRESENTED PARTY IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH AWAMI LEAGUE DURING 1971 CRISIS. HE BELONGS TO SECTION OF PPP THAT ADVOCATES DEMOCRATIZATION OF PARTY AND RADICAL CHANGES IN PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM. HE SUFFERED MILD HEART ATTACK IN 1973.

(D) AHMAD IS 43 AND COMES FROM MINOR LAND OWNING FAMILY IN C INIOT (JHANG). HE HOLDS LAWNDegree FROM PUNJAB UNIV., AND HAS BEEN PRACTICING LAW IN SARGHODA. SINCE JOINING PPP, HE HAS WOGKED ON LABOR AFFAIRS, AND HIS APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY VARIETY OF LABOR LEADERS.

(E) DARISQK IS LANDLORD FROM PROMINENT BALUCH TRIBE OF DERA GHAZI KHAN, AND SON OF LEADING SARDAR WHO WAS MEMBER OF WEST PAKISTAN ASSEMBLY IN 50'S. HE IS ABOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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32, AND OBTAINED BACHELORS DRGREE IN LAW AND MASTERS DEGREE INHISTORY FROM PUNJAB UNIV. HE WON HIS SEAT IN 1970 AS INDEPENDENT, JOINING PPP IN MID-1972. HE IS RELATIVELY UNKNOWN IN LAHORE, BUT WAS REPORTEDLY BACKED FOR CABINET POST BY BALAKH MAZARI, PPP MPA WHO DID NOT WISH TO JOIN MINISTRY.

4. COMMENT: THERE IS NO CONSENSUS IN LAHORE ABOUT WHY KHAR GOVERNMENT WAS DISSOLVED OR AS TO MEANING OF NEW RAMAY GOVERNMENT. ON THE SUBJECT OF DISSOLUTION, SOME OBSERVERS ASSERT THAT KHAR HAD BECOME TOOBIG FOR HIS BRITCHES, SO THAT BHUTTO HAD TO PULL HIM DOWN AS HE DID MUMTAZ BHUTTO IN SIND. OTHZRS TEND TO BELIEVE KHAR GOT INTO A POWER STRUGGLE AND WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO WIN THE BATTLE. WE MAY NEVER KNOW THE REAL ANSWER, BUT MOST OF OUR SOURCES AGREE THAT KHAR IS NOT YET DEAD POLITICALLY, ALTHOUGH HE MAY BE SERIOUSLY DEMOTED.

5. OPINIONS ON MEANING WND FUTURE OF RAMAY GOVERNMENT VARY WIDELY. SOME OF THE MOST THOUGHTFUL POLICITAL OBSERVERS IN LAHORE BELIEVE THAT EVENTS TO DATE, SUCH AS DELAY IN NAMING NEW CABINET AND FAILURE TO NAME IT IN FULL, ALONG WITH RUMORS THAT RAMAY'S FIRST LIST OF MINISTERS WAS REJECTED BY BHUTTO, INDICATE THAT INTERNECINE STRUGGLE CON- TINUES IN PUNJAB, AND THAT RAMAY HAS NOT YET FULLY ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS FOREMOST POLITICAL POWER IN PROVINCE. THEY POINT TO FACT THAT RAMAY TOOK THREE OF HIS FIVE MINISTERS FROM PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND OPINE THAT THIS WAS DONE TO APPEASE KHAR, PARTICULARLY IN CASE OF WATTOO. THIS OF COURSE PRESUMES THAT ALL MEMBERS OF PREVIOUS CABINET WERE

IN KHAR CAMP, AND IGNORES FACT THAT RAMAY HIMSELF WAS PART OF PREVIOUS CABINET. IN ANY CASE, KHALIQ AND KARDAR WERE CONSIDERED TWO OF CLEANEST MINISTERS IN KHAR CABINET AND WATTOO, ALTHOUGH HE MANAGED TO HANG ONTO PRESTIGIOUS JOB AS PUNJAB PPP PRSIDENT AND AT SAME TIME ENGINEER HIMSELF TO BE PRIMUS INTER PARES IN PREVIOUS CABINET, IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED OPPORTUNIST WHO WILL SIDE WITH ANYONE THAT WILL HELP HIM.

6. THERE IS ON OTHER HAND UNDERCURRENT IN LAHORE RUMOR CIRCUIT TO EFFECT THAT RAMAY IS MERELY CARETAKER WHILE PUNJAB LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL SCENE SORTS ITSELF OUT. ADHERENTS OF THIS VIEW SUSPECT THAT RAMAY WILL BE ALLOWED TO HOLD CHIEF MINISTERSHIP THROUGH FLUID PERIOD DURING WHICH LABOR AND ECONOMIC TROUBLES ARE EXPECTED TO BECOME INTENSE AND WHILE THERE IS JOUSTING FOR POSITION IN UPCOMING FEDERAL CABINET RESHUFFLE. THEY PREDICT THAT RAMAY WILL STEP ASIDE WITHIN NEXT SIX MONTHS TO MAKE WAY FOR MORE POWERFUL FIGURE. (IN THAT REGARD, MOST OFTEN-HEARD NAME IS THAT OF GOP FINANCE MINISTER MUBASHIR HASAN.) PROPONENTS OF THESE ARGUMENTS HOLD THAT POSITION OF PUNJAB CHPEF MINISTER IS NECESSARILY SECOND-MOST POWERFUL IN PAKISTAN, AND MAPNTAIN THAT, WHILE BHUTTO MUST NECESSARILY BE WARY OF WHO HE PUTS IN TY JOB, HE MUST ALSO INSURE THAT THE INCUMBENT IS STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP "HEARTLAND" PROVINCE IN LINE.

7. THIRD VIEW OF CURRENT SITUATION IS HELD BY VARIETY OF OBSERVERS OF PUNJAB POLITICAL SCENE, SOME OF WHOM MAY BE INDULGING IN WISHFUL THINKING, AND OTHERS OF WHOM (MOSTLY CAPITALISTS) FEAR THE WORST FOR THEIR INTERESTS. THIS SET OF OBSERVERS LOOKS UPON RAMAY'S PROMOTION AS VICTORY OF SO-CALLED LEFTISTS IN PPP, AND FORESEES NEW CHIEF MINISTER INCHING HIS WAY TOWARD CONSOLIDATION OF POWER BY THAT GROUP. THEY BELIEVE THAT KHAR'S FALL AND RAMAY'S MOVE UP WERE DIRECT RESULT OF COORDINATED EFFORTS OF LEFT WING OF PPP, INCLUDING MUBASHIR HASAN, GOP PRODUCTION MINISTER J. A. RAHIM, GOP MINISTER KHURSHID HASAN MEER, GOP HEALTH MINISTER SHEIKH RASHID AND FORMER PUNJABIHIEF MINISTER MERAJ KHALID. THEY ASSERT THAT RAMAY, WITH HELP OF HIS LEFTIST COLLEAGUES, WILL CONCENTRATE UPON IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR BRAND OF SOCIALISM, TO EXCLUSION OF OTHER CONCERNS. WORST OF ALL, IN INDUSTRIALISTS' VIEW, IS PROBABILITY THAT PRIME MINISER BHUTTO WILL EITHER BE TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH PERSONAL POLITICS TO NOTICE, OR THAT HE WILL LET HIMSELF BE LED ALONG BY VISIONS OF SOCIALIST PANACEA.

8. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLYTO TELL WHICH OF ABOVE THREE VIEWS OF SITUATION IS MOST ACCURATE, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT BHUTTO

WILL BE CONTENT TO LET CURRENT MANEUVERING IN PUNJAB RUN ITS
COURSE. THIS INTERPLAY DOES NOT ITSELF AFFECT HIS POSITION,
AND PROBABLY SERVES IN SHORT RUN TO WHITTLE SOME PEOPLE
(ESPECIALLY KHAR) DOWN TO SIZE. HE IS APPARENTLY WATCHING
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THE SITUATION WITH CARE (HE HAS VISITED LAHORE THREE TIMES
IN PAST TWO WEEKS), BUT SEEMS TO PERCEIVE NEITHER THREAT TO
HIMSELF NOR INDICATIONS OF POLICY SHIFTS. (PRIME MINISTER
TOLD PRESS MARCH 27 PEOPLE SHOULD NOT READ TOO MUCH INTO CHANGE
OF PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER. AT SAME PRESS CONFERENCE HE GAVE
BOOST TO RAMAY BY ANNOUNCING THAT GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO AMEND
CONSTITUTION TO PROVIDE FOR APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARIES AT CENTER AND IN PROVINCES - SEE PARA 2 ABOVE.)
GRIFFIN

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Message Attributes

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